

## Trustees & General Meeting Minutes

The Priory Rooms, Birmingham

Saturday 13 October 2018



### [A] Trustees Meeting

Present:

<b>Dave Morris (Chair)</b>	London Friends Groups Network (LFGN), and Haringey Friends of Parks Forum
<b>Sarah Royal (CEO)</b>	Birmingham Open Spaces Forum (BOSF)
<b>Michelle Furtado (Vice Chair)</b>	Adur and Worthing Green Spaces Partnership
<b>Martin Willis</b>	Nottingham Open Spaces Forum (NOSF)
<b>Ann Ault</b>	WalsallParks Forum
<b>Roland Bruce (Treasurer)</b>	Bristol Parks Forum
<b>Lynsey Atherton</b>	Keep Britain Tidy (KBT)
<b>Michael Straw</b>	Greenwood Forum, Nottinghamshire
<b>WasyIStrutynskyj</b>	Association of Manchester Open Spaces (AMOSS)
<b>Nigel Sharp (Sec.)</b>	North West Parks Friends Forum (NWPFF)

<b>Minutes of previous meeting (28.7.18) &amp; Matters Arising</b>	
Minutes were agreed.	
<b>Membership and Partnerships update</b>	
Memorandums of Understanding have been signed with Fields in Trust, Groundwork and now The Conservation Volunteers (TCV).	
<b>Constitutional issues</b>	
The revised NFPGS constitution complicit with CIO status has been adopted. DM agreed to now progress CIO application.	<b>DM</b>
<b>Treasurer's Update</b>	
All expressed gratitude to KBT for support. The need for additional funding and fundraising was noted – the treasurer role would benefit from dedicated use of a tablet and it was agreed to include this as an item for a funding bid.	
The addition of a Paypal button on the website may help however RB noted issues since this requires a bankers card. RB to discuss with webmaster James.	<b>RB</b>
Costs associated with continued support for the Parks Charter also need to be reviewed and claimed as necessary.	<b>DM</b>
<b>Bids for Funding</b>	
Agreed to progress a bid to the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation (EFF) once CIO status (and hence eligibility) is confirmed. SR is in contact with EFF via Laurence Scott.	

<p>NS noted the need for NFPGS officers to record activity and time including activity such as Parks Action Group (PAG) support and responding to enquiries. Similarly, he noted other outputs from website hits and social media represents additional information may represent useful evidence to evaluate NFPGS contributions and substantiate future funding bids.</p> <p>DM reported that the PAG has agreed 'in principle' support for NFPGS led proposals for regional networking conferences to enable increased awareness and to elicit feedback to support PAG activity. It is proposed to extend initial community focused proposals to link with park manager forums and other groups too. Although organized by an external event organizer, it is hoped these will still provide the basis to support continued development of NFPGS network links too.</p>	<b>All</b>
<b>Sponsorship and Additional Support</b>	
<p>The contribution of KBT was recognized. DM reported links with the Charities Aid Foundation and the prospect of a donation of £7500 of unrestricted funds to support core activity. It was agreed to discuss use of funds at the earliest opportunity after approval.</p> <p>RB confirmed intention to use the offer of a London Marathon place to raise funds for NFPGS. All expressed admiration and support. An additional place will be available for a volunteer and a 'just giving' site could be used for donations.</p>	<b>RB</b>
<b>Website, Media and Communication</b>	
<p>RB suggested NFPGS consider opening a separate bank account for donations and agreed to investigate options.</p> <p>MF reported progress with Twitter – there are now over 900 followers, and 200+ on the Parks Charter account.</p>	<b>RB</b>
<b>Outreach Work and Partnerships</b>	
<p>It was suggested the PAG should be a separate agenda item to highlight NFPGS links and input.</p> <p>LA reported KBT is about to embark on the next round of Green Flag Award (GFA) applications. GFA International is progressing well with activity in Australia, New Zealand and Singapore, in addition to European development (Spain, Portugal, Holland, Ireland). A new Communications and Marketing manager is in post and the next Love Parks Week is due to start 12 July '19.</p> <p>LA added that following the Mail on Sunday parks campaign the next Tidy Britain All Party Group will focus on parks.</p> <p>MW is due to attend an APSE East Midlands event (Oct.) and NS a similar event for the NW (Manchester, Nov.).</p> <p>DM is due to attend a Parks Conference in the SE, with MF and DM/SR will attend a national APSE event.</p>	<b>MW</b>  <b>DM/MF/SR</b>

## [B] General Meeting

Attendance details as Trustees Meeting, but with additional attendance from:

<b>Helen Ellis</b>	Wirral Parks Friends Forum
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## Apologies

<b>Keith Elder</b>	South Staffordshire
<b>Rep</b>	Dudley
<b>Rep</b>	South Gloucestershire Forum
<b>Rep</b>	Bracknell Parks Forum
<b>Rep</b>	Newcastle Parks Forum
<b>Paul Campbell</b>	Sheffield Green Space forum
<b>Rep</b>	Trafford Parks

<b>Minutes of previous meeting (28.7.18) &amp; Matters Arising</b>	
Minutes were agreed.	
<b>Trustees Meeting Update</b>	
A brief résumé of the Trustees meeting was provided for those not present earlier, specifically re. NFPGS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Organization and administration</li><li>• Financial matters</li><li>• Communication and coordination</li></ul>	
<b>Area Forum Updates</b>	
<u>Walsall</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- An Awards for All application is being prepared</li><li>- Forum is receiving support from the Council officers</li><li>- Meetings held four times a year</li></ul>	
<u>Greenwood (Nottinghamshire and Derby)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- 4 general meeting a year</li><li>- 4 committee meetings a year</li><li>- around 20 groups supported with training including first aid and power tools</li><li>- support from Council grant</li><li>- issues from loss of Council staff and reduced management of country parks</li><li>- issues related to handover of parks from County to local councils leading to fragmentation of service and management</li></ul>	
<u>Manchester (AMOSS)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Manchester adopting a 10yr parks &amp; green space strategy</li><li>- Concerns at loss of site based staff</li><li>- Council officers to do not attend AMOSS meetings</li><li>- Aim to develop membership</li><li>- links to NWPF event (see later)</li></ul>	

### Bristol

- successful Re-thinking Parks bid details at: <http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/foundation/>
- ongoing issues with Council links

### Wirral

- change of chair, loss of momentum
- 52 groups, need to continually develop database and membership
- 4 meetings a year, steering group meets regularly with Council
- good relationship with Council but major impacts from cuts (e.g. income targets)
- Birkenhead Park bid for World Heritage Site status
- Forum chair also chairs Parks Partnership & Performance Board with potentially 60 partner agencies!
- Next Forum meeting due late Oct. – use event to consult on group priorities and needs from Forum
- Concern at income generation demands
- Forum led on preparation of 'park posters' based on images provided by groups, posters displayed to promote parks
- Developing new website <https://wirralparksforum.org.uk>
- Links and support for NWPFF

### Adur&Worthing

- 40 groups, 12-15 regular attendance at meetings.
- Developing training and web support
- Positive support but social media capacity issues

### Nottingham (NOSF)

- 60 groups, approx. 20 attend meetings
- quarterly meetings and committee mtgs
- links to City Council, good level of support linked to GFA etc.
- income generation generally through non intrusive measures
- most income ring-fenced for parks
- issues include administrative review into a new unitary authority

### Birmingham (BOSF)

- now established as a CIO, around 130 groups
- SR and Matt (social media) in post, also admin support (1 day/week)
- 4 trustees, monthly meetings also meet regularly with Council
- support includes training, admin collate volunteer data to support activity.
- Regular strategic meetings with Head of Parks service including budget review
- BOSF review training needs, encourage groups to support funding bids
- Annual questionnaire re. activity, social media, links and needs
- Submissions rewarded with prize draw
- Submission of volunteer data reports rewarded £10 monthly
- BOSF fronts insurance support through Unity (£135/ group/ year)
- Funding support through EFF and others
- Bids supported by group data evidence
- Grants workshops organized – support for fee (if successful).
- Website includes links to groups and support
- BOSF a 'critical partner' to support Council and mitigate cuts impacts
- Organize public meetings to ensure awareness of issues, lobby for and coordinate support to campaign against cuts, etc, providing templates for letters etc.
- Maintain City Council provide core services, BOSF provide added benefit

- issues include loss of site management (20%)
- lobby with Wildlife Trust and other partners
- seeking positive legacy from 2022 Commonwealth Games
- links to W.Mids Combined Authority
- work with Young People and University against litter (art project)

#### North West (NWPFF)

- capacity and communication issues to sustain and develop member database
- sub-regional events held (Lancaster, Manchester)
- additional events due (Merseyside, Cheshire)
- issues for Cumbria event due to rural and extensive nature of area
- Conference planned for April 2019
- New Area Forum developing in Sefton
- Local issues include:
  - o Loss of staff capacity/ support for community development
  - o Increased income/ events focus
  - o Loss of site management

#### Haringey

- Good relationship with parks service (in house)
- New groups forming
- Lobby for scrutiny review with excellent recommendations
- New 10 yr open spaces strategy being formulated, by Council/FGs partnership
- All park sites being covenanted in batches
- Parks service seeking to lever in funds from other service areas
- Walks booklet produced with public health budget

#### London (LFGN)

- LFGN 6wly meetings of 30 friends groups from sub-region
- Themed discussions – e.g. ‘tranquility in green space’
- Area borough reports – and co-ordination of news, activity and issues
- Organising FGs Film Show in Jan 2019
- Links to national and sub-regional initiatives, e.g.
  - o Love Parks Week events
  - o London Plan review
  - o London National Park City (due for launch in 2019)

Brief additional reports from:

#### Sheffield (Paul Campbell)

- agreement with Council to provide free insurance for up to 30 member groups conditional on participation in the Forum
- joint work on WW1 memorial trees in parks

#### South Staffordshire (Keith Elder)

- groups focused on general green space not formal ‘parks’
- Friends groups reviewing grounds maintenance following service changes – reverting to ‘in house’.

#### New Area Forums

DM/ RB attended launch of new South Gloucestershire Area Forum with 12 member Friends groups.

DM attended launch of Bracknell Forest greenspace groups network

<b>Strengthening regional coordination</b>	
<p>We have lobbied for Parks Action Group commitment to regional networking events, mainly targeted at FGs and local authority parks managers. Regional development most viable based on an area hub or cluster of activity</p>	
<b>Campaigning and Publicity</b>	
<p><u>Parks Action Group</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dave, Sarah and Michelle are engaged in the PAG process. It has successfully brought together sector organisations, although the cross-departmental involvement from Govt has been less successful.</li> <li>- DM circulated papers including a project delivery plan (for regional networking conferences) from the Community Empowerment workstream which he chairs.</li> </ul> <p><u>Rethinking Parks 'Community Empowerment' project.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This is now underway, backed by the NFPGS. Its based at Lordship Rec, where Dave has been hired by the Friends of Lordship Rec as a consultant to co-manage the 2 year project. Involves 10-15 Friends Groups at pilot sites and Lordship Rec development of a website to serve the needs of Friends Groups across the UK.</li> <li>- Lordship Rec got an 8min slot on BBC1 Countryfile, which used it as an example of good practice, and called for investment in public parks. It included Dave (as Chair of the Friends Group there as well as the NFPGS) talking about the national funding crisis.</li> </ul> <p><u>The Charter for Parks</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Launched (Jun 21) with publicity on national media including Daily Express, Guardian, and another BBC1 Countryfile piece. Over 20 national organisations have signed up so far. Details at <a href="https://www.parkscharter.org.uk">https://www.parkscharter.org.uk</a></li> <li>- DM confirmed plans to lobby the Chair of the select committee to urge this to reconvene and challenge the government on PAG progress and commitment.</li> <li>- Additional campaigning has included the Mail on Sunday 'Save Our Parks' weekly articles and related petition – started after discussions with KBT and Dave, and using some of our Charter points word for word (but not mentioning the Charter!). The series has also engaged high profile supporters such as Alan Titchmarsh, the NHS England chief, and responses from 2 cabinet members. The campaign has also yielded evidence and case studies from Friends Groups (to which we had circulated a call for evidence) of current challenges and threats to green spaces nationwide.</li> </ul>	<p><b>DM / SR / MF</b></p> <p><b>DM</b></p> <p><b>DM</b></p>
<b>Date of Next Meeting</b>	
<p>Saturday 26 January 2019 at the Woodman Pub, Birmingham Saturday 16 March 2019. AGM. Venue tbc, Birmingham</p>	<b>Committee</b>